

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application, and reconsideration of the Office Action of October 6, 2004. Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-3, 7-23, 27, 29, 30, and 49-57 will remain pending in this application. The changes to the claims are supported by the specification including the Figures and original claims. No new matter is incorporated by this Amendment.

This application was withdrawn from allowance and prosecution reopened. For this reason, an interview was arranged. Applicants wish to thank Examiner Lamb for meeting with Applicants' undersigned representative on November 30, 2004 to discuss the present application. During the November 30, 2004 meeting, certain approaches to amending the claims were discussed to place the claims in condition for allowance. By this Amendment, the claims, specification and Figures have been amended as discussed during the meeting. That is, the specification and Fig. 2 now label the manner of control, and claim 1 now positively recites a "control means" accordingly. Claim 11 now positively recites a piston such as shown in the preferred exemplary embodiment of Fig. 3 (piston 501). The Examiner agreed to consider the amended claims and contact Applicants' undersigned representative should further changes be considered necessary to the claims.

In addition, Applicants note that claims 49-57 are currently withdrawn. However, since claims 49-57 depend from claims that are believed to be in condition for allowance, Applicants respectfully request that claims 49-57 be rejoined once allowance of the

application again is indicated. This also was discussed during the November 30, 2004 meeting.

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Claims 1, 7, 9, 10, 26, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as purportedly anticipated by Claassen (U.S. Pat. No. 4,744,330). The Office Action asserts Claassen describes each feature of these claims and thus anticipates the claimed invention. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Independent claim 1 (from which claims 7, 9, 10, 26 and 27 depend) positively recites a control means. Such control means is defined as causing both the return side and the feeding side two-way valves to open and discharge coating by the time that feeding is started, and thereafter, during feeding, as causing the return side valve to close. Specifically, the return side valve is closed after expiration of a prescribed period of time, to stop further discharge of the coating to the return side. Also, in the device of claim 1, the feedline is said to connect with the (flow path) segment between the feeding side two-way valve and the return side two-way valve. Such connection between the valves place the valves in a parallel arrangement with respect to coating fed from the tank. In this parallel arrangement, feed and return side valves are operated independently by the control means whereby both valves can be open at the same time, closed at the same time, or one opened, and one closed. This enables the closing of (only) the return side valve after the recited “prescribed period.”

As discussed during the November 20, 2004 Examiner interview, Claassen neither teaches nor fairly describes at least the above detailed features of claims. Hence, for at

least this reason, Claassen fails to anticipate the claims. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

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Claims 2, 3, 8, 11-23, 29 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as purportedly obvious based on Claassen. Applicants also traverse this rejection.

Applicants first discuss claims 2, 3, 8, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 29, and 30 which all ultimately depend from claim 1. The deficiencies of Claassen with respect to claim 1 are discussed above. In short, Claassen neither teaches nor fairly suggests at least the features of claim 1 described above. Moreover, there is nothing in the teachings of Claassen which would motivate those of ordinary skill to modify Claassen to have the above described features.

Applicants next turn to independent claim 11 (and claims 14, 17, 20 and 23 which depend from claim 11). Independent claim 11 now recites the coating returning means as including a piston which draws the coating from the nozzle, and feeds the coating to the nozzle (to return the coating to the nozzle). As discussed during the November 20, 2004 Examiner interview, Claassen also fails to teach or suggest at least the coating return means and the control means features of claim 11. Again, there is nothing in the teachings of Claassen which would have motivated those of ordinary skill to have employed these features of claim 11.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants submit this rejection is overcome and respectfully request that it be withdrawn.

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Applicants respectfully submit that this Amendment and the above remarks obviate both outstanding rejections in this case, thereby placing the application in condition for allowance. Allowance of this application is earnestly solicited.

If any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17 are due in connection with this filing, please charge the fees to Deposit Account No. 02-4300; Order No. 033216.083.

If an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 is necessary that is not accounted for in the papers filed herewith, such an extension is requested. The extension fee should be charged to Deposit Account No. 02-4300; Order No. 033216.038.

Respectfully submitted,

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